

as well as the provisions for the disability community and our language minorities are major achievements. These are the reasons why CORRINE BROWN, why EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, and why JOHN CONYERS, why SYLVESTRE REYES all believe this is the right thing to do. Even though there is a provision in this bill with which they will end up disagreeing, their view is, go forward, get to Senate-House conference, see if we cannot work out other differences and pass landmark legislation.

The White House will be involved. We are not done with this. I believe we can get out of the Senate with a good bill, as I believe we can get to conference, resolve it with the Ney-Hoyer bill, and come back for the 2002 elections this year.

The President has put \$1.2 billion in Fiscal Year 2003 budget for election reform issues. There is no reason the \$400 million provided in the bill cannot be drawn down by States so voters who vote this fall can see changes they never would have imagined occurring as quickly as they can.

That is what is at stake. That is how we hope to resolve the roadblock in this process. We are aware and are working on the Oregon and Washington issue. Senators WYDEN and GORDON SMITH and PATTY MURRAY and MARIA CANTWELL have spoken eloquently on behalf of their unique situation on how they conduct vote by mail Federal elections and cast and count ballots. We are trying to accommodate them. Our goal in this bill has never been to deprive a State of the ability to conduct its elections in the unique way they do. We are trying to accommodate their interests.

I apologize for reviewing where things are. I want people to know how much is at stake. This is not another bill we are dealing with, as the Senator from Nevada has graciously pointed out. This is fundamental. Thomas Paine said more than 200 years ago, this is the primary right to vote, upon which all other rights depend. If you get this one wrong, it is awfully hard to get the other ones right. We are talking about something that is so important to the long-term health and well-being of our Nation. We saw how much harm was done, how many people were hurt in the 2002 elections when things went wrong. We bear a responsibility as the national legislative body to come up and respond to what occurred in this country in 2002 and occurred before that. We only became aware of it to the extent we did because of what happened in the Presidential race.

The country believes we need to make this process work better. It is in shoddy condition. To engage in this Congress and not engage this question would be a shortcoming we should not endure. We must accept and meet this challenge. I apologize to my colleagues, particularly the leadership, for the time this has taken. It is my fervent hope we are coming down to the final few hours of this. This is the last major hurdle. It is not to minimize the significance of other amendments that Members have, but this is a major battle between a House divided in many ways, as we saw by the vote that occurred on the tabling motion, almost 50-50 in terms of how people felt. If we get beyond that and deal with the other issues, I am fairly hopeful by Monday night or Tuesday morning

Members will have an opportunity to vote on the first election reform proposal before this body of this size almost in 40 years, since the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I don't know what else we will accomplish in this Congress, but I hope at the end of the day when we look at the 107th Congress we can point to this landmark election reform bill as one of the significant achievements of this Congress.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 4 P.M. MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2002

Mr. REID. I believe there is no further business to come before the Senate; therefore, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:15 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 4, 2002, at 4 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate March 1, 2002:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JOHN R. EDWARDS, OF VERMONT, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF VERMONT FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE JOHN HOLLINGSWORTH SINCLAIR.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 1, 2002:

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

LESLIE SILVERMAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2003.